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INTRODUCTION

Christopher Burden-Strevens

Zonaras' chief usefulness with regard to Dio is that he preserves the structure of the first twenty books. Dio's treatment of the history of Rome to 146 B.C. has never been discussed except in terms of source-criticism, and is not analysed in the present work. The task would repay anyone who attempted it.¹

More than half a century has passed since Fergus Millar opened his seminal *Study of Cassius Dio* with this emphasis on the importance of the first two decades of Dio's *Roman History*. Cassius Dio's eighty-book history of Rome, researched and written over a period of twenty-two years beginning perhaps in the 190s or 200s CE,² represents the most ambitious project in Roman historiography since Tacitus, and the fullest treatment of the history of the city since Livy and Dionysius.³ In recognition of this fact, recent years have witnessed a renewed interest in the *Roman History* from both literary and historical perspectives. Much recent work has focussed on Cassius Dio's value as an eyewitness source for the events of 182–229 CE, during which time the historian had privileged access, first as a senator, then as a provincial administrator and imperial *comes*, to the emperor and his subjects.⁴ This 'contemporary

¹ Millar 1964, 3.

² The proposed dates of composition for Dio's history vary. The earliest proposals envisage completion of the bulk of the work as early as the 210s CE, with subsequent revisions and additions (so Gabba 1995, 295–301; Millar 1964, 28–32; Swan 1997, 2549–2555; Swan 2004, 28–36) and the latest suggest completion even in the 220s or 230s (Letta 1979; Barnes 1984). For an up-to-date summary of the prevailing views, see Kemezis 2014, 282–293.

³ So Kemezis 2014, 92 : "His is the only work we know of from antiquity, lost or extant, to have embraced in such a detailed narrative both the entire republican period and a substantial stretch of the monarchical period. Other authors, most obviously Livy, had produced works that were much longer in terms of volume of text. Universal historians such as Diodorus or Nicolaus had covered a longer chronological span, thanks to the incorporation of large amounts of mythological and non-Greco-Roman material. No author, however, follows a single polity in detail through so many epochs."

⁴ Millar 1964, 5–27 remains a solid summary of the historian's life and career; the main details can be found at Cass. Dio 69.1.3, 74[73].12.2, 78[72].7.2, 80[79]5.1; *IGRR* 3.654; *PIR* II C 413 and 492. For the dates of his consulship and other provincial commands see Schwartz 1899, 1684–1686; Vrind 1923, 163–168; Gabba 1955, 289–301; Reinhold 1988, 1–4; Swan 2004, 1–3. Recent studies have also done much to further our understanding

history' (or *Zeitgeschichte*) which occupies Books 72–80 is certainly more authoritative than the *Historia Augusta*, and Dio's deliberate claims to authority as a Roman statesman and courtier throughout these books give a radically different perspective to the comparatively anonymous Herodian.⁵ Equally, the extant sections of the direct tradition (Books 36–60), which cover the history of Rome from the middle of the Third Mithridatic War to the first five years of the reign of Claudius (69 BCE—46 CE) have enjoyed a revival. In part this emerges from the relative security of using these books: they survive in direct, not epitomated, form, and until Augustus' death in Book 56 present only a few lacunae.⁶ But textual issues aside, the richness of Dio's account of the final decades of the Republic and the emergence of the Principate of Augustus contained in Books 36–56 is incontrovertible, and has facilitated a tremendous growth in the scholarship. Cassius Dio was evidently less prone to abridge or compress than our other major Greek historian of this period, Appian;⁷ and recent research has shown the distinctive way in which he treated the decline of the *res publica* into autocracy, with an original attention to the corrosive effect of public speech and ineffective fora of debate,⁸ to the Republic's institutions and their noxious impact upon political culture,⁹ and to competition for office and prestigious commands.¹⁰ Indeed, Dio's is by far the most detailed and sophisticated historiographical account we have of the final decades of the Republic—compare, for example, with Sallust, Appian, and the *Periochae*—and so too for the Principate of Augustus.

Yet the first two decades—a quarter of the historian's massive project—have not generally shared in this increase in interest. They begin with the earliest myths surrounding the

of Cassius Dio as an intellectual and researcher within the Severan court, on which see Moscovich 2004 and Jones 2016.

⁵ Seminal works in the study of Dio's contemporary history begin with Millar 1964, 119–173 and Bering-Staschewski 1981. More recently, Davenport 2012 and Scott 2015 on Cassius Dio and Caracalla, with further related material in Schulz 2016; also Gleason 2011. Dio's claims to authority have been recently discussed, though mainly from a linguistic perspective, in Burden-Strevens 2015a. For a recent discussion of the identity of Herodian and his reticence to divulge, see Kemezis 2014, 260–272, 304–308.

⁶ See John Rich (Chapter Eight) in this volume.

⁷ The major comparison of Cassius Dio and his predecessor Appian remains Gowing 1992, with special reference to their accounts of the triumviral period; see also Hose 1994. The contributions in the recent volume of Welch 2015 concentrate more on Appian on his own terms; a full treatment of Appian and Cassius Dio for those sections of the narrative not discussed by Alain Gowing remains to be done.

⁸ Vervaeke 2010; Kemezis 2014; Burden-Strevens 2015b and 2016; Mallan 2016.

⁹ Urso 2005; Coudry 2016a and 2016b; Lindholmer 2016; Burden-Strevens forthcoming 2019.

¹⁰ Kemezis 2014; Hurlet 2016; Coudry forthcoming 2019.

foundation of the city and close, in Book 21, with the final defeat of Carthage. These are, certainly, the least researched and least understood parts of all Cassius Dio's ambitious undertaking. Historically, the most conventional approach to Dio's earlier books up to Book 21 has been to concentrate on his dependence upon his sources, and especially Livy.¹¹ One remarkable feature of these earlier parts of the work, as discussed by Jan Libourel some fifty years ago, is their pessimistic interpretation of human nature; Dio's is by some margin the most violent and negative account we have of the patrician-plebeian struggle which (if we are not too radical with the tradition) marked the first two centuries of the Republic.¹² Yet for Libourel, this phenomenon emerged from the historian's sources, perhaps a now-lost annalist who was more hostile toward Rome and its early history than either Dionysius or Livy. The assumption here is that Dio was 'following' a source rather than making a distinctive contribution to the tradition or shaping 'early Rome' in deliberate ways that would interact with other sections of his *Roman History* in the pursuit of a particular rhetorical objective.

The tendency to focus on Dio's first two decades insofar as they evince his debt to a particular source continues today. Benedikt Simons' important 2009 monograph, *Cassius Dio und die römische Republik*, is an example both of the potential richness of this area of study and of the dishearteningly broad range of answers one might posit to the question of Dio's sources. Simons' study is impressive in its scope, bringing fresh analysis to the first 35 books of the *Roman History* through discussion of Dio's account of the origins of Republican institutions and magistracies, narrative 'epoch boundaries' in the earlier history, and Dio's characterisation of individuals such as Scipio Africanus Maior. However, Simons' treatment of these topics chiefly explores their debt to a particular tradition rather than the historian's literary art or use of these institutions and individuals to fulfil major interpretative and thematic functions.¹³ It must be stressed that Simons credits our historian with more independence than has conventionally been the case. He emphasises Dio's critical distance from his sources, his careful selection of those which met his judgement of that which was necessary to include, and his sovereignty over the material—copying, mixing, reworking, and even correcting. In short,

¹¹ Schwartz 1899, 1692f.; Klotz 1936; most recently Simons 2009, 109–119 and 279–299.

¹² Libourel 1968, 1974.

¹³ The stated aims of Simons' study are to identify the historian's sources, identify the way in which he selected and reworked them, and to show how he presented Roman history accordingly. See Simons 2009, 2.

“[Dio] ist kein Ausschreiber seiner Quellen gewesen”.¹⁴ Simons may be correct that Cassius Dio used Licinius Macer, Ulpian, and Posidonius for Books 4 and 6, Coelius Antipater for Book 13, Valerius Antias for Books 16–19, and Posidonius for Books 22 and 24, ‘following’ them to varying degrees (“Licinius Macer folgend”), and that these sources were the basis for the ongoing narrative (“Grundlage für die fortlaufende Erzählung”).¹⁵ But the choice for us is then what to do with this information. For our purposes, Simons’ major contribution to the study of Dio’s first two decades lies in his short but useful analysis of the epitomator Zonaras (to whom we will shortly return) and his methods of copying and abridging the earlier portions of the *Roman History*.¹⁶ The contributions by Valérie Fromentin (Chapter One) and Chris Mallan (Chapter Three) aim to build on this work and are informed by it.

Another recent and related approach to Dio’s early books has been to investigate the historian’s literary models. Hence in the magisterial collection of 46 chapters recently published in edited format by Valérie Fromentin, Estelle Bertrand, Michèle Coltelloni-Trannoy, Michel Molin, and Gianpaolo Urso—the largest single collection of new research on our historian—the questions posed of the first two decades are these: was he modelling himself upon Livy, Dionysius, or Polybius? Or did he draw from a variety of traditions?¹⁷ Naturally these are important questions, and the answers proposed for them in that landmark collaboration have been sympathetic. But the point of departure for this volume is that we will also benefit from studying Cassius Dio’s portrait of ‘early Rome’ for its own sake as an historical interpretation and a literary narrative, and so with a different set of questions in mind.

These questions are fundamentally concerned with the unity of the *Roman History* as an historiographical whole. In other words, the purpose of this volume is to consider Dio’s first

¹⁴ Simons 2009, 301, rejecting many earlier views of Cassius Dio as mere copyist and author of the “grey and formless mass” immortalised by Schwartz (e.g. p.9: “mann ihn als einen Ab- und Ausschreiber sieht, der in starker Abhängigkeit vom Standpunkt seiner Vorgabe sein Werk Stück und Stück zusammensetzt”). The flexibility with which the historian could handle his sources, including the blending of information from various texts in the pursuit of an authoritative narrative, has rightly been long recognised for other portions of the *Roman History* and should not surprise us too much here; see, for example, McDougall 1991 for the sources of Caesar’s Gallic campaigns, where evidently Dio did not simply ‘follow’ Caesar.

¹⁵ Simons 2009, 300–309.

¹⁶ Simons 2009, 25–32.

¹⁷ Briquel 2016; De Franchis 2016; Fromentin 2016; Foulon 2016; Simon 2016; Urso 2016. This list does not include Rich 2016, who uses Dio’s first three decades for a study on annalistic organisation and structure in the earlier portions of the work.

two decades as an integral part of the text in the round. Cassius Dio tells us himself that his history had its earliest origins in a pamphlet he had written some time after 193 CE on the dreams and portents which inspired Septimius Severus to hope for power. According to Dio, Severus was (naturally) only too pleased to find divine approbation for his new position, and after receiving a long and complimentary letter from the emperor, Dio was visited by a dream in which a divine manifestation (τὸ δαιμόνιον) commanded him to write a history. This appears to have started as a monograph on Septimius Severus' campaigns; and, finding high approval with the new emperor as well as with other members of the court. Dio decided to go back to the beginning, incorporating this monograph into a single history *ab urbe condita*.¹⁸ This was the first history of its kind since Livy, but with the addition of an extra two centuries of events. Like Livy's, Cassius Dio's project began in the aftermath of civil war. But by his own admission, it was the recent struggles of the year 193 CE, the 'Year of the Five Emperors', which inspired him to return to Rome's earliest origins. The history as a whole is thus the *product* of civil war in a way quite unlike Livy's.¹⁹ That is a story which begins with the contention between Alba Longa and Rome and the so-called Conflict of the Orders, and continues through the upheaval of the first century BCE. Yet unlike Livy, Dio's history presses on to the contest of 69 CE and to the many internecine conflicts following Commodus' assassination. Armed with two hundred years' more hindsight than his immediate predecessor in this branch of the annalistic tradition, Dio consequently viewed *stasis* and civil war as integral parts of Rome's legacy from the beginning to its end. Accordingly, one of our questions in this volume is the extent to which Dio's account of *stasis* in his early books, especially in the patrician-plebeian struggle, intersects with his interpretation of the reasons for the decline of the Late Republic, and serves as a prolepsis to it. The result, as Carsten Hjort Lange shows in Chapter Six, is ultimately connected to government: to Dio, violence was the natural crop of δημοκρατία. The Republican 'constitution' was always brittle, and the germ of that argument is to be found in the historian's account of the earliest years of the *res publica*.

It is only through reading the first two decades that we can perceive the source of that inherent weakness in Republican government. As Mads Lindholmer explores in Chapter Seven, Cassius Dio developed a political philosophy from his earliest books which was sceptical toward fundamental democratic principles, especially ἰσονομία (equality of political

¹⁸ Cass. Dio 73.23.

¹⁹ See the comments by Verena Schulz (Chapter Ten) in this volume.

privilege) and ἰσομοιρία (equality of distribution).²⁰ This emerges from his pessimistic view of φύσις (human nature), in which it is not man's predisposition to share power, but rather to dominate. Thus in our earliest fragments of the first book, Dio writes that "it is no doubt because of his nature that mankind cannot endure being ruled by that which is like and similar to him, partly because of envy and partly because of contempt".²¹ The attribution of the fragment is uncertain: Boissevain associates it with Zonaras' account of Romulus' murder at the hands of the Senate. If this is correct, then Dio sought to depart from Livy quite radically at an early stage. Romulus' nebulous disappearance is not (so Livy) an example of the king's apotheosis and the divine favour of the fledgling city.²² Rather, it was a chance for the historian to reflect on the inevitable consequences of the unequal distribution of power and privilege among natural equals: envy, contempt, and (in Romulus' case) murder at the hands of an internecine Senate. These ideas recur repeatedly throughout Dio's early books, for example concerning the reign of Numa and the conflict between the Roman king Tullius Hostilius and the Alban dictator Fufetius Mettius.²³ As we move into his account of the early Republic, that pessimism continues: the historian underlines repeatedly that power-sharing of the kind necessarily involved in a δημοκρατία would always be flawed owing to man's nature.²⁴ These ideas are, of course, not new: the historian's debt to Classical Athens here is undeniable.²⁵ The use of φύσις as an explanatory model for historical events is equally Classical, and Dio's debt to Thucydides' pessimistic view of human nature is acknowledged throughout this volume.²⁶

²⁰ I recently explored these ideas in a paper entitled 'Reconstructing Cassius Dio's Programmatic Preface?' at the conference *Cassius Dio the Historian: Methods and Approaches* at the University of Southern Denmark, 7–9 December 2016. Granted, Fechner 1986, 37–39, 46 treats ἰσονομία and ἰσομοιρία as neutral terms in Dio, but this seems mistaken; they are loaded with hostility and irony, especially in the speeches. Hence Catulus at 36.32 and Agrippa at 52.4.1–3 extol 'democratic' virtues of ἰσονομία and ἰσομοιρία which have no relationship whatsoever with the actual tenor of the Republican narrative, and which we know (now) from the early books Dio roundly rejected in practice. See Kemezis 2014, 111–112 and 130; Burden-Strevens 2015, 21–22 and 138–195.

²¹ Cass. Dio F 5.12: Δίων α 'οὕτω που φύσει πᾶν τὸ ἀνθρώπινον οὐ φέρει πρὸς τε τοῦ ὁμοίου καὶ τοῦ συνήθους, τὰ μὲν φθόνῳ τὰ δὲ καταφρονήσει αὐτοῦ, ἀρχόμενον'.

²² Livy. 1.16.

²³ Cass. Dio F 6.3, F 7.2–3.

²⁴ Zonar. 2.120.28–33 (Dindorf); Cass. Dio F 17.14, F 17.15.

²⁵ For example, Plat. *Gorg.*; Ps.-Xen. *Ath. Pol.*

²⁶ E.g. in the contributions of Lange (Chapter Six), Rich (Chapter Eight) and Schulz (Chapter Ten). Rees 2011 gives the fullest study of Cassius Dio's use of φύσις in his history and its relation to Thucydides. The scholarship on Dio's debt to Thucydides is considerable; the present volume chooses to explore new areas of study and will

But Cassius Dio is our first interpreter of the rise and fall of the Roman Republic to have explained that process through a theoretical critique of power-sharing and equality, applying Greek political philosophy to Roman political practice. Moreover, as Mads Lindholmer's contribution shows, these ideas permeate the entirety of Dio's account of the Republic to its end with the accession of Augustus in Book 53. The early books—especially those which treat the Regal Period and the early Republic—are thus intimately connected to the remainder of the historian's narrative. These books have a programmatic function, introducing themes and ideas, such as the inevitability of destructive competition in a system based on equality, and the inevitability of pernicious envy (φθόρος) under a δημοκρατία,²⁷ which will be integral to Dio's interpretation of the crisis of the Republic in the remaining decads.

One of the questions posed in this volume is thus whether Cassius Dio sought to make his own mark on the city's early years, and how this account fits within his overall interpretation of Roman history as a whole. Dio's is evidently the most pessimistic account we have of these years, breaking in a distinctive way with the idealised Roman tradition—exemplified by Sallust and Livy—of moral decline from a golden age (the *Dekadenmodell*).²⁸ What emerges from this inquiry is that Dio viewed *stasis* and civil war as integral parts of Rome's legacy, and saw competition and envy as the natural consequence of Republican government from its inception. In his narrative of the last century of the *res publica* it is clearly the latter which causes the former; and these are ideas which the historian had in mind from the very beginning of his work.

There were of course exemplary and positive figures in Rome's earlier history, too. It would be wrong to view the first two decads of the *Roman History* as uniquely and consistently hostile. The figures of Scipio Africanus the elder, M. Furius Camillus, and C. Fabricius Luscinus had their place in the tradition, and the historian did not pass them by. Scipio Dio treats as an exemplary figure, virtuous and blameless;²⁹ Camillus proves his integrity by

make no attempt to repeat the arguments of an already saturated field. For Dio and Thucydides, see Melber 1891, 290–297; Litsch 1893; Kyhnitzsch 1894; Schwartz 1899, 1690–1691; Millar 1964, 42; Manuwald 1979, 280–284; Aalders 1986, 294; Lintott 1997, 2499–2500.

²⁷ On which see Simons 2009, 222–240 and Burden-Strevens 2016.

²⁸ Discussed in Hose 1994, 381–383, esp. 405. Hose argues that ultimately, Dio's history was not conceived according to a framework of moral decline. But this is not a question of straight affirmatives and negatives: see nn. 59–60 below and Mads Lindholmer in this volume.

²⁹ Cass. Dio F 63.

refusing to take Falerii in c.394 BCE by means of treachery;³⁰ and Fabricius negotiations with the invading king of Epirus, Pyrrhus, prove his ἀδωροδοκία (incorruptibility), untempted by offers of gifts and a prestigious place in Pyrrhus' court.³¹ As Marianne Coudry shows in Chapter Five, Dio's account of these figures is conventional, posing no challenge to the use of these characters as *exempla* in the annals of earlier Rome. However, she argues that the historian also shaped his portraits of Scipio, Camillus, and Fabricius in a meaningful and distinctive way which served two purposes. Firstly, Dio deliberately uses all three commanders as a first (surviving) opportunity to explore constitutional and political topics which will be relevant to his Late Republican narrative. These topics include, for example, extra-legal power and extraordinary commands; respect for ancestral custom; the corrosive relationship between achievement and envy; and the political impact of the Roman triumph and military success. These issues will be familiar to anyone who has read Dio's Republican books, and especially Books 36–44: they are the pillars of the historian's explanatory framework for the crisis of the Republic. This then raises a second purpose: the use of these figures as a prolepsis, or foreshadowing, of Sulla, Pompey, and Caesar. Scipio Africanus in particular is related to these figures in a deliberate way, and neither he nor Camillus, for all their excellence, are able to escape the envy of their peers, who seek to impede their success with often disastrous consequences. This evinces a consistent set of political themes and ideas.

Ultimately, the effect of this is to facilitate a critique of democratic government and to foreground the return of monarchy to Rome. Cassius Dio unapologetically believed that monarchy was the best form of constitution;³² in the contributions by Carsten Hjort Lange, Mads Lindholmer, and Marianne Coudry we perceive that the historian considered the δημοκρατία untenable. But autocracy was not a panacea. How, then, to explain the presence of violence and civil war, or tyrannies and *dynasteiai*, or factional strife of the kind seen under the Republic, within the monarchies of the Regal Period and the Principate? Dio is the only historian of early Rome within the *ab urbe condita* tradition to have witnessed the mechanisms of imperial rule under the Principate first-hand as well as reading the mytho-history of the early kings. Understandably unlike Dionysius and Livy, he included both in his *Roman History*. This raises several intriguing possibilities to be explored in this little book.

³⁰ Cass. Dio F 24.2–3. Throughout this volume, all dates prior to the turn of the third century BCE should be read as approximate.

³¹ Cass. Dio F 40.33–38.

³² So Cassius Dio underlines in his own voice at 44.2 and 53.19; for further discussion, see Madsen 2016.

One of these is the history of the Senate. Dio did not challenge the tradition that the Senate owed its foundation to Romulus, and so believed that by the 3rd century CE the *patres* had existed as a political organisation for almost a millennium:³³ first as an advisory council of elders under the early kings, then as the arbiters of power in an oligarchic Republic, then as the instruments of a small cadre of dynasts under the late-Republican *dynasteia*,³⁴ and finally as powerless witnesses to a monarchy reborn. Dio's interest in the history of the Senate and its role within a truly well-governed state—which, in his view, must be a monarchy—emerges from some of the earliest fragments in the text. Thus Romulus is made to assume a harsh attitude to the Senate and circumvent it, commenting that “I have chosen you, *patres*, not for you to rule me, but for me to command you”;³⁵ equally, Tarquinius Superbus is made to consider abolishing the *ordo* altogether.³⁶ As Jesper Majbom Madsen shows in Chapter Four, Dio was prompted to reflect at length on the role of the Senate in an ideal monarchy by the turn of recent events in his lifetime: the end of the system of imperial adoption from the ranks of the Senate which had been practiced between 96 and 161 CE, the emergence of the Severan dynasty, and the persecution of senators unfortunate enough to have taken the wrong side. In that context, the giant speeches of Agrippa and Maecenas in Book 52 prior to Augustus' accession, which contain much comment on the composition and role of the Senate, take on particular weight—especially if we believe Millar's suggestion that they were declaimed *viva voce* in the court of the Severan emperor Caracalla.³⁷ As Jesper Madsen shows, this is all part of a narrative which begins in the early books. As a Severan senator, Dio used his *Roman History* to record not only a version of ‘what happened’, but to address a contemporary audience with similar political concerns.

A related issue is the character of the ruler. The ideal monarchy depends as much upon the character and communication of the monarch *per se* as upon his interactions with the senatorial elite. Here, too, Cassius Dio appears to have used his early books as a means of exploring political issues relevant to the third-century context. Dio's first two books evidently

³³ In this volume, *patres* is used to denote the Senate or senators in general, but see Forsythe 2005, 167–170 for an interpretation of the term in its original usage.

³⁴ On *dynasteia* as a specific period in Rome's history in Dio, see Kemezis 2014, 104–112; for the definition and its use by the historian in both the singular and plural, Freyburger-Galland 1996.

³⁵ Cass. Dio F 1.11: ἐγὼ ὑμᾶς, ὦ πατέρες, ἐξελεξάμην οὐχ ἵνα ὑμεῖς ἐμοῦ ἄρχητε, ἀλλ' ἵνα ἐγὼ ὑμῖν ἐπιτάττωμι.

³⁶ Cass. Dio F 11.4.

³⁷ Millar 1964, 104.

covered the mytho-history of the Roman kings from Romulus to Tarquinius Superbus. Book 3, to judge from the character of the remaining fragments, must have been a substantial series of debates broadly analogous with the ‘Republic *versus* monarchy’ theme of Agrippa and Maecenas in Book 52, and may well have occupied the entirety of the book, including an embassy from Tarquinius Superbus in exile in Caere.³⁸ In a significant change in our approach, this means that we cannot fully appreciate the Agrippa and Maecenas debate of Book 52, which closes the Republican narrative, without considering also the debates of Book 3 that open it.³⁹ This raises the question of whether we can relate the material of the first two books to later sections of the *Roman History* in a similar way. As Verena Schulz demonstrates in Chapter Ten, Dio used his account of the early kings in a distinctive way apparently unique within Roman historiography, establishing a series of criteria of evaluation which would recur in the Imperial books, and especially in Books 72–80. Thus the change in (for example) Septimius Severus’ character upon his accession recalls a similar transformation in Lucius Tarquinius Priscus; and the tale of Tanaquil, the wife of Priscus and mother-in-law and promoter of Servius Tullius, foreshadows the relationship between Augustus, Livia, and Tiberius later. Dio clearly used intertextualities, analepsis, and prolepsis to create typologies in the Regal narrative which can be recalled during the ‘contemporary’ books in a meaningful way, facilitating comparison between Rome’s ancient and contemporary kings and using the past in polemic of the present.

The kinds of question posed above and in this volume thus relate to Cassius Dio’s political and philosophical views, the way in which these were explored and articulated in *all* parts of his *Roman History*, and how Dio used these principles to explain the cause of historical events—especially the emergence and decline of the Republic and the success of emperors. One question not necessarily asked in this volume is “what happened”. Recent works on the history of early Rome to the First Punic War already fulfil this purpose; our concern has been to study Dio’s first two decades in historiographical terms and on their own account. It is remarkable, however, that important scholarship on early Rome has tended not to factor Cassius Dio’s first two decades into its comparison of the source-material. Gary Forsythe’s 2005

³⁸ See the contribution of John Rich (Chapter Eight) in this volume.

³⁹ An enormous amount has been written on the long *controversia* of Book 52, but far less so about that of Book 3. For the debates on the foundation of the Republic, see briefly Fechner 1986, 39–40. For Maecenas, see Hammond 1932, 88–102; Beicken 1962, 444–467; Millar 1964, 102–118; Dorandi 1985, 56–60; Fechner 1986, 71–86. For Agrippa, see McKechnie 1981, 151–153; Fechner 1986, 71–86; Adler 2012, 477–520. For recent comparison of the two, Kemezis 2014, 130–131 and Burden-Strevens 2016. This list is by no means exhaustive.

Critical History of Early Rome includes in its survey of the literary evidence sources which are entirely lost, such as Q. Claudius Quadrigarius (fl. 70s BCE), yet does not include Cassius Dio, whom we have, both in substantial fragments and in epitomated form. Similarly, Forsythe draws from Diodorus Siculus and Dionysius of Halicarnassus, two of our other Greek sources for the early history of Rome, but does not mention Dio anywhere in his study. This is especially remarkable if we place the *Roman History* and Diodorus' *Library of History* side-by-side as projects: Diodorus composed a universal history in forty books encompassing the mainland and western Greek world as well as the Persian empire, devoting comparatively scant attention to Rome.⁴⁰ Dio, who was far more heavily indebted to the Roman annalistic tradition, sought to write the history of the polity from its origins and on a scale not known since Livy, following decades at the centre of Roman political life.⁴¹ Tim Cornell's 1995 *Beginnings of Rome* is more conservative of the main aspects of the tradition and takes more account of Dio: Cornell has rightly recognised that the *Roman History* is partly independent of both Livy and Dionysius, including details absent in both of those sources, and summarises that "Millar's observation (p.3) that a special study of the early books would be worth the effort still holds true".⁴² Nevertheless, he never draws from what remains of Dio's first two decades and rarely from Zonaras' epitome of them.⁴³ Forsythe's and Cornell's invaluable historical studies naturally ask different questions of the material to this collection. However, it is the premise of this volume that we can facilitate historical analysis by understanding our sources. It remains the case that Cassius Dio's early books have never been studied for their own sake—a situation incomparable to that of other major historians of early Rome.⁴⁴ Our hope is that modern historians of this period will form a more reliable picture of early Rome, enhanced by Dio's analysis, by understanding his preoccupations and ideas. This can lead us more confidently to accept, or reject, the perspective he offers on events.

⁴⁰ Forsythe 2005, 69: "the oddities of Diodorus' Roman material can usually be attributed to the author's own carelessness and general indifference to the details of the annalistic tradition".

⁴¹ To compare Cassius Dio and Diodorus in this way does not suggest acceptance that the latter was a "slavish compiler" and an uncritical copyist of what he read; for the debunking of this view see Sacks 1990. My purpose here is to underline the relative importance of Cassius Dio as a source for Roman history (his project) in comparison to Diodorus (not his project). For the sophistication of certain of Diodorus' techniques and his approach to history-writing in general in conversation with the Greek tradition, see recently Hau 2016.

⁴² Cornell 1995, 3 and n.6.

⁴³ See Cornell 1995, 264, 367, 463 n.22, 465 n.20.

⁴⁴ E.g. Gabba 1991 on Dionysius; Forsythe 1999 on Livy.

A question of understandable interest to ancient historians will be Cassius Dio's sources for the period. As already mentioned,⁴⁵ *Quellenforschung* has long enjoyed a privileged position in the scholarship on the earlier portions of the *Roman History*. Moreover, the recent collection of Valérie Fromentin *et al.* explores some very fruitful possibilities for Dio's sources and/or models, including Polybius and Dionysius of Halicarnassus. Dio's debt to both of these, and especially the former, has been studied dramatically less than his putative dependence upon Livy. This volume is not generally concerned with source-criticism. Nevertheless, any attempt to understand Dio's distinctiveness as a source for 'early Rome' and his hopes to develop an assertive place within the tradition must confront his relationship with Livy in a way that challenges assumptions about imitation or continuation, and indeed will profit from doing so. This forms the basis of Gianpaolo Urso's investigation in Chapter Two. As Urso states, the model which Dio necessarily had to confront as he set out on his ambitious project was, above all, Livy. He demonstrates that the first two decades of the *Roman History*, just as the Late Republican and Augustan books, evince Dio's remarkable independence and the breadth of his research. As will be clear from the peculiar flavour of Books 1–21, distinctive to Dio and reflecting his own political and philosophical concerns, our historian did not seek to rewrite or imitate his predecessor, less still write a *fine a Livii*. In fact, Cassius Dio appears to have drawn from a range of pre-Livian sources, including information wholly independent of the *Ab Urbe Condita* and giving an alternative version of the early history of Rome.

Setting this aside, if one does wish to use the *Roman History* as an historical source then the greatest drawback which must be addressed is the state of the text. For the earlier portions of the work we are wholly reliant on intermediaries who either excerpted or epitomated sections of Dio for reasons quite different to those of the historian in writing them. For example, the tenth-century *Excerpta Constantiniana*, compiled during the reign of Constantine VII in the tenth century CE, are easily the richest source of verbatim fragments of Dio for the first two decades. But the selection and arrangement of those fragments was directed by the particular interests of the Byzantine excerptors. Thus, segments of the *Roman History* were placed alongside those of other ancient authors into collections of *excerpta* grouped together by theme, for example 'concerning virtues and vices' (*Excerpta de Virtutibus et Vitiis*), 'concerning conspiracies' (*Excerpta de Insidiis*), 'concerning moral statements' (*Excerpta de Sententiis*) and 'concerning embassies' (*Excerpta de Legationibus*). These excerpts are often useful to us in identifying (for example) Dio's possible sources, and especially the range of his

⁴⁵ See nn. 11–13 above.

moral and political thought (above all the *Excerpta de Sententiis*). Moreover, they can be supplemented by a number of other direct fragments of Dio preserved in other collections: for example, the 141 short quotations in the (possibly) seventh-century *On Syntax*, an anonymous grammatical text;⁴⁶ and up to possibly sixty-six *sententiae* of Dio's in the gnomological *Florilegium* erroneously ascribed to Maximus the Confessor. The contribution by Christopher Mallan in Chapter Three concerns the methodology of using these collections of fragments, and furthermore serves as a cautionary note. He warns that as we read the precious remains of 'real' Dio in the first two decades, we deal with material collected by scholars who had their own authorial agendas: they wove together the fragments of the *Roman History* as well as other authors in such a way as to create their *own* history of the Regal Period. That by no means indicates that our task of using these selections to understand Dio's first two decades and their place within the history as a whole is hopeless. However, we should not treat these fragments as generally representative of the content of Books 1–21. The apparent abundance of 'moralising' statements, for instance, in the remains of the early books can only represent a minute fraction of the historian's original,⁴⁷ and the survival of this material has been directed by the ethical and linguistic interests of an audience Dio never planned to address.

Be that as it may, the verbatim fragments that survive of the early books—thanks to the Byzantine excerptors—furnish another benefit of critical importance for our understanding of Cassius Dio's work. That is their preservation of acts of speech, either as standalone set-pieces or clusters of debate, inserted by the historian throughout Books 1–21. Numerous fragments conserved within the *Excerpta* evidently derive from original orations written by Dio in direct discourse; often these can be easily identified by their use of the second person plural, alongside other lexical clues. The speeches composed by Dio for his *Roman History* are one of the most rich and exciting aspects of his historiographical and explanatory method. Looking forward to the first century BCE, for example, we note that Dio never states in explicit terms the reasons for the Republic's failure and Augustus' success, and certainly never in his own voice. That he leaves to his characters. In Q. Lutatius Catulus' doomed warning against

⁴⁶ For the dating see Petrova 2006, xxviii with fuller treatment in Christopher Mallan's contribution to this volume.

⁴⁷ The term 'moralising', vague and insubstantial, is often used in criticism of Cassius Dio's *Roman History*, e.g. Millar 1964, 42–43, 78–83; Lintott 1997, 2501–2502; Rogers 2008, 297, among many other examples. However, see the recent study of Hau 2016 for a reappraisal of the importance of the moral dimension in Greek historiographical explanations, and Burden-Strevens 2015b for Dio's use of *sententiae* as a means of persuading his audience, especially regarding the validity of his arguments and interpretations.

conferring further extraordinary powers upon Pompey (36.31–35), or Cicero’s lament at the state of the *res publica* (44.23–49), or Maecenas’ recommendations to Octavian (52.14–40), we receive not only a series of statements “appropriate to the speaker and the situation”,⁴⁸ but the historian’s own extended reflection on the crisis of the Republic and its causes, presented in a more subtle and persuasive idiom than outright authorial assertion. In recent years there has been a move to consider the speeches the essential interpretative kernel of Cassius Dio’s *Roman History*, or at least one aspect of it.⁴⁹

The contributions of Valérie Fromentin and John Rich in this volume are therefore of particular interest for scholars concerned with this aspect of Dio’s endeavour. Fortunately, the detail on our historian’s use of formal orations in the first decads is not only preserved in the direct fragments of the *Excerpta*, but can additionally be supplemented by the work of another Byzantine scholar, Zonaras. John Zonaras, a chronicler and theologian who served as private secretary to Alexios I Komnenos until his death in 1118 CE, used Dio directly as the source for his own work. His *Abridgement of Histories*, a universal history from Creation to Alexios I’s death, relied mainly upon Dio—supplemented by Plutarch—for its Books 7–9. These books covered the period from the arrival of Aeneas in Italy to the destruction of Carthage and Corinth. Zonaras’ epitome followed the *Roman History* very closely, abridging the content of twenty books of Dio into two of its own. Zonaras’ text is often so close to Dio’s original that, where parallel passages survive, they are nearly identical; he is accordingly an invaluable source for the original content of Dio’s early books. Certain liberties taken by Zonaras elsewhere with his source-material, including the excising of entire passages or their abridgement to a single note,⁵⁰ do not detract from the general picture. Unfortunately for us, Zonaras was only able to use Dio for events up to 146 BCE. At this point he explains in some detail that, despite an enthusiastic search (ταῦτα πολλάκις ζητήσαντί μοι ταύτας, μὴ εὕρηκόντι δ’ ὁμῶς), his text of the *Roman History* failed somewhere in or around Book 21.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Lucian, *Hist. Cons.* 58; Quint. *Inst. Or.* 10.1.101.

⁴⁹ So Kemezis 2014; 2016; Burden-Strevens 2015; 2016; forthcoming 2019; Coudry 2016a; further comments in Valérie Fromentin’s contribution below (p.49).

⁵⁰ For a summary of Zonaras’ treatment of Dio’s original, including abridgement and summary (as well as insertion and deletion), see Simons 2009, esp. 29–30.

⁵¹ Zonar. 9.31. For Zonaras there were two possibilities: either the ravages of time had obliterated the remaining books to which he no longer had access (τοῦ χρόνου διεφθαρκότος αὐτάς), or his remote location far from Constantinople was really the point at issue, and a more thorough search in the city might reveal them (αὐτὸς ὑπερόριος ὢν καὶ πόρρω τοῦ ἄστεος ἐν νησιδίῳ ἐνδαισιώμενος). Chistopher Mallan’s contribution in Chapter

Until Book 21, then, Zonaras' importance cannot be over-emphasised. As a general rule it is safe to assume that material included in Books 7–9 of his *Abridgement of Histories* figured also in the early books of Dio. As Valérie Fromentin shows in Chapter One, this degree of faithfulness on the part of the epitomator can enable us to identify the general outline of an original act of speech included in Dio's text, so giving valuable testimony of the prevalence and role of set-piece orations and debates in the first two decades of the history. Indeed, Valerie Fromentin argues that Zonaras furnishes not only bare *testimonia* indicating that an act of speech occurred, but additionally identifies speakers, context, setting, and usually a brief summary of the overall point expressed. This information is invaluable. As Fromentin notes, it is regrettable that the epitomator does not seem to have appreciated the subtlety with which Cassius Dio deployed these compositions—as means of characterisation, causal explanation, or to elucidate major themes or political and constitutional topics. This only adds to our appreciation of the sophistication of Dio's use of speeches within his text. Nevertheless, Fromentin's contribution to this work demonstrates that our historian used set-piece orations in direct discourse just as fully in the early books as those surviving in the direct tradition. This can only be appreciated thanks to Zonaras' fidelity to his source.

These ideas are developed further in Chapter Eight with John Rich's study of extended and short speech episodes in Books 1–21. To this point research into Cassius Dio's use of speech in the early books has been remarkably limited;⁵² such enquiries are naturally hampered by the discrete nature of the excerpted fragments that preserve them and by the scale of Zonaras' abridgement, notwithstanding the useful information he provides about their context and performativity. In his contribution, Rich provides the largest and most detailed study to date of the role of such compositions in the fragmentary portions of Dio's *Roman History*. John Rich identifies 16 'extended' and 36 'short' occasions of oratory in these early books: Dio appears to have made just as much (indeed, more) use of formal set-piece orations in Books 1–21 as in Books 36–56. At the same time, he appears to have envisaged a far smaller role for short and informal instances of *oratio recta* for the first two decades than for the later portions. This suggests that Dio's sophisticated method with the speeches of the surviving direct tradition may have been not only the product of his particular interest in the decline of the Late Republic and the transition to the Augustan Principate, but may also have formed part of his

Three suggests that the former may have been the case, since interest in Dio after the tenth century appears to have been less for its historical narrative and more for the preservation of individual episodes and *sententiae*.

⁵² See e.g. Millar 1964 79–80; Stekelenburg 1971; Fechner 1986, 29–31, 39–43; Kemezis 2014 106–107.

methodological approach to speeches from the very beginning of his history. As Rich shows, the array of topics treated in these early speeches is impressive. Thus Dio gave not only episodes well-attested within the tradition, such as the exchange between Pyrrhus of Epirus and Fabricius at Tarentum, or the debates surrounding the repeal of the *lex Oppia* in 195 BCE (present in Dionysius and Livy, respectively).⁵³ Rather, Dio appears—in keeping with the particular character of Rome’s early conquests—to have concentrated in substantial detail on non-Roman voices. There are speeches of Samnite generals concerning the treatment of Roman captives;⁵⁴ debates at Carthage on the question of war or peace with Rome;⁵⁵ and tripartite addresses to armies, involving Hannibal and Hanno at Carthage and Ticinus.⁵⁶ Speeches of this kind are entirely absent from the *Roman History* until Boudicca’s battle exhortation in Book 62 (3–5).⁵⁷ Perhaps, then, Dio used the first two decads to explore Rome’s relationship with the peoples of the Mediterranean world in an elaborate manner unrepresented elsewhere in the surviving direct tradition of his work.

Certainly our historian was aware, especially in the early books, of the kinds of conflict and controversy that cultural interactions could provoke. Earlier studies of Cassius Dio as a hellenophone provincial from Nicaea in Bithynia have tended to describe him as a Greek who became “Romanised”.⁵⁸ Yet, as Brandon Jones’ study in Chapter Nine argues, while Dio may have rejected idealised traditions of the virtue of the early city, he clearly identified with the Roman historiographical *topoi* of *virtus* (ἀνδρεία) and *luxuria* (τρυφή). He associated these traits, respectively, with the period before and after Rome’s involvement in the affairs of the Greek world. This is uncontroversial within Roman historiography: like Sallust and Livy, Cassius Dio conceived of a causal relationship between the growth of empire and so *luxuria* on the one hand, and the decline of *virtus* on the other. Where Dio is more distinctive, as Brandon Jones shows, lies in his inversion of that theme in the contemporary history. Under Caracalla and other Severan emperors it is Rome which exports *luxuria* or τρυφή to the Greek world, not *vice versa*; and in these circumstances it is Dio and his peers who represent *virtus*,

⁵³ D.H. AR 19.13–18; Livy 34.1–8.

⁵⁴ Cass. Dio F 36.12, 14.

⁵⁵ Cass. Dio F 55.1; Zonar. 8.21.9.

⁵⁶ Cass. Dio F 55.10, F 57.4–5; Zonar. 8.22.5–7, 8.23.8.

⁵⁷ On which, see Gowing 1997; Adler 2008; 2011.

⁵⁸ Palm 1959, 81–82; Aalders 1986, 283; Reinhold 1986, 220; Gowing 1992, 1 and 10 n.6. For a recent reappraisal, see Burden-Strevens 2015a.

the characteristic trapping of true ‘Romanness’.⁵⁹ Cassius Dio’s polemic against the τρυφή of the emperors of his time, and his localisation of ἀνδρεία within himself and with the Senate, is achieved by aligning his contemporary history ideologically and linguistically with the first two decads, using verbal clues to underscore Rome’s cultural transformations past and present.

The research contained within these ten chapters demonstrates the unity of Cassius Dio’s *Roman History* in its textual entirety. The sum total of these contributions asserts our historian’s programmatic use of ‘early Rome’ to introduce major factors of history integral to his explanation of the decline of the Republic: *stasis* and civil war; competition and envy; the role of the Senate in an ideal state; and the importance of speech—especially its moral ambiguity and potential for misuse. At the same time, we show that returning to the earliest history of “this land in which we dwell” had for Dio ideological and political significance. Early Rome provided the historian with a remote, semi-mythical arena to say to his contemporaries that which he felt needed to be said.

Having epitomated the content of this volume, it remains to make some general comments on the organisation of the collection. The ten chapters are arranged by theme into three parts. Part One (‘The Text’) deals with Zonaras, the *Excerpta Constantiniana*, and Dio’s relationship with Livy. Readers unfamiliar with the textual tradition of Books 1–21 will find Part One especially helpful. But it addresses also controversies familiar to experts of Cassius Dio, and seeks to investigate the problem that all readers of the early books of the *Roman History* face: we are dealing not with one history, one author, and one agenda, but with several. Part Two (‘Military & Political History’) explores the historian’s account of political and military events mainly between the turn of the 5th and turn of the 3rd centuries BCE, from the (alleged) first decade of the Republic to the Hannibalic War. It has in view, particularly, Dio’s distinctiveness as a source for this period and his use of ‘early Rome’ to foreshadow developments in his account of the Late Republic, so aiding his interpretation and explanation of its decline. Finally, Part Three (‘Early Rome & Dio’s Project’) relates the first two decads explicitly to later sections of the *Roman History*, especially the contemporary history of Books 72–80. The purpose of this part is to analyse these early books in relation to the text in the round, and not solely as a prolepsis to the Late Republican narrative. The three chapters

⁵⁹ Hence Kemezis 2014 148–149: “Dio’s final answer is to present as an alternative none other than himself...his model of changing Romanness as represented by the growing appropriation and adaptation of older senatorial traditions by new generations of provincial elites is an important glimpse into the distinctive mind-set of a senatorial aristocracy.”

contained within this section demonstrate the coherency with which Dio planned his *Roman History*, including a generally consistent approach to the writing of historiographical speeches and a sustained focus on themes important to contemporary political life.

On a final note, it will be apparent that this volume takes a deliberately broad definition of ‘early Rome’. The events of Dio’s Books 1–21, as we have already stated, guide the reader up to the destruction of Carthage in 146 BCE. This is some one hundred and twenty years later than modern histories of this era in the city’s evolution tend to close: a fairly recent device has been to periodise ‘early’ Rome up to the outbreak of the First Punic War.⁶⁰ The reasons for our approach are partly textual, partly historiographical. On the text, since Zonaras’s epitome is of such importance for our understanding of the early books of the *Roman History*, and so frequently discussed here, it makes little sense not to follow his epitome of Rome’s earliest centuries to its end. To cease our enquiry with the First Punic War (Zonar. 8.8 = Cass. Dio 11 F 43)⁶¹ would involve discarding the entire second decad of Dio’s history that is as worthy of study, and scarcely researched, as the first. On the historiography, Dio’s predecessors in the Latin tradition treated 146 BCE as a turning-point in the history of their polity. Sallust, whose work Dio evidently knew,⁶² dated Rome’s decline to the fall of its old enemy: “Carthage, the rival (*aemula*) of the Roman empire, perished from root to tip; all the land and sea lay open; only then did Fortune sully and disorder everything”.⁶³ Tacitus’ idea is similar: only when the Romans had subjugated the world and destroyed rival states (*aemulis*) did they fall into cupidity and conflict with one another.⁶⁴ These tropes are schematic and misleading, but Dio accepted

⁶⁰ So Cornell 1995; Forsythe 2005.

⁶¹ Book numbers are only approximate; see Christopher Mallan (Chapter Three) and John Rich (Chapter Eight) in this volume.

⁶² Cass. Dio. 43.9.2–3.

⁶³ Sall. *Cat.* 10.1–6: *Carthago aemula imperi Romani ab stirpe interiit, cuncta maria terraeque patebant, saevire fortuna ac miscere omnia coepit.*

⁶⁴ Tac. *Hist.* 2.38: *ubi subacto orbe et aemulis urbibus regibusve excisis securas opes concupiscere vacuum fuit.*

the analysis even as he rejected idealistic traditions of a more virtuous ‘earlier’ Rome.⁶⁵ He was simply writing a better history-book, not ripping one up.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Fechner 1986, 136–154. Hence, perhaps, the choice to emphasise the momentous occasion with the debate between Scipio Nasica and Cato, which survives now only as a *testimonium* at Zonar. 9.26, and the ‘necrology’ of Carthage at 9.31, both of which will probably have been much fuller in Dio’s original.

⁶⁶ For recent surveys of Dio’s historiographical approach in general (and not in connection with Books 1–21) see Madsen, J.M. & Lange, C.H. (eds.). *Cassius Dio: Greek Intellectual & Roman Politician* (Leiden & Boston, 2016) and Id. (eds.). *Cassius Dio the Historian: Methods and Approaches* (Leiden & Boston, forthcoming 2019).